United Nations A/HRC/WG.6/27/BHR/3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 February 2017

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Twenty-seventh session
1–12 May 2017

Summary of stakeholders' submissions on Bahrain*

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a summary of 43 stakeholders' submissions[1] to the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Information provided by stakeholders

A. Scope of international obligations[2] and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies[3]

2. Four Freedoms Forum (FFF) and Mabade'a recommended Bahrain to provide a roadmap to ensure ratification of all United Nations human rights treaties.[4] Alkarama, JS4, JS9 and ADHRB recommended ratifying the Convention against Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED), the two OP-ICCPR, and OP-CAT.[5] JS7 recommended ratifying the Second OP-ICCPR and align its legislation with the Protocol.[6] JS11, HRF and Mabade'a recommended acceding to OP-CAT.[7] BYLA recommended ratifying OP-CEDAW.[8] JS9 urged Bahrain to consider ratifying the ICRMW and the ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.[9]

3. JS9 and ICSHF urged Bahrain to join the International Criminal Court.[10] JS10 recommended Bahrain to accede to and fully implement the 1954 and 1961 statelessness

* The present document was not edited before being sent to United Nations translation services.

conventions.[11] ODVV urged to ratify the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the additional protocol.[12]

4. NIHR and BYLA recommended revising Bahrain reservations to CEDAW that do not contradict with Islamic Sharia provisions.[13] JS5, JS8 and JS10 recommended Bahrain to fully lift reservation on Paragraph (2) Article (9) and ensure full compliance with CEDAW.[14]

5. MCHR urged signing and ratifying the Statute of the Arab Court for Human Rights and withdrawing all reservations on the Arab Charter for Human Rights.[15]

6. AI welcomed Bahrain's engagement with the UPR process, and for having submitted a mid-term report in 2012 on the implementation of second UPR cycle recommendations.[16]

7. Nine submissions recommended Bahrain to issue open invitation for Human Rights Council Special Procedures (SP) mandate holders, noting that it has not allowed any visit since its last review, despite accepting related recommendations.[17] Twelve submissions requested full cooperation with the Special Rapporteur (SR) on Torture by inviting the mandate holder immediately noting that approximately 9 recommendations called for banning torture and allowing prisons inspection.[18] Twelve submissions observed that the visit requests of the Special Rapporteurs on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in 2011, Human Rights Defenders in 2012, the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in 2014 and Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, remained unanswered.[19] GIDHR, JS7 and JS17 urged the SR on freedom of religion or belief to request a visit to Bahrain.[20] JS6 called for an urgent visit of the SR on the Independence of Judges to Bahrain.[21] JS7 and JS17 recommended extending an invitation to the SR on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions.[22]

8. AI, Alkarama, JS9, JS14 and JS2 recalled that during the 30th session of the Human Rights Council, 33 countries urged Bahrain to implement fully the recommendations of the Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) that was established to investigate the protests in 2011. They also urged implementing the UPR recommendations and to strengthen cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).[23] JS14 recommended inviting OHCHR to open an office in Bahrain to provide training and monitor the government's progress on implementation of the recommendations.[24]

9. Alkarama, NIHR and Mabade'a called on Bahrain to submit all periodic reports to the UN human rights treaties on time.[25]

B. National human rights framework[26]

10. Alkarama noted that in 2012, the High Coordinating Committee was established and tasked with the preparation of the Human Rights National Plan of Action. In 2014, it was restructured and is now chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.[27] BHRWS observed that Bahrain does not have a human rights strategy.[28]

11. AI, Alkarama JS16 and JS17 noted that although the government established the Bahrain National Institute for Human Rights (NIHR) in 2009, it has failed to bring it into full compliance with the Paris Principles. In 2016, the NIHR was accredited with "B" status by the Global Alliance of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights'. They recommended making necessary reforms to improve the NIHR's compliance with the Paris Principles to be upgraded to "A" status.[29]

12. GG recommended creating a National Action Plan for Human Rights Education and developing a national curriculum for elementary and high school so students know their Human Rights.[30]

C. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

1. Cross cutting issues

Equality and non-discrimination[31]

13. JS12 observed that the authorities have worked to systematically exclude Shia culture from the country's official history, media, and educational curricula. State-sponsored textbooks and museums typically downplay or outright ignore the importance of Shia – and specifically Baharna – communities in the history of Bahrain.[32] ICSFT and GIDHR observed the absence of any doctrinal or ideological beliefs for the Shias in Islamic education curricula and universities and Shia cities and villages were renamed, to erase traces of their heritage and to be excluded from the government's tourism promotion. They demanded Bahrain to stop erasing history and heritage of the Shia population, and make necessary reforms to the educational curriculum to ensure that they are free of hate speech and religious exclusion or discrimination.[33]

14. LHRD stated that over the past years, the ratio of the Shiite sect appointments in senior posts is less than 15 percent. In 2014, they occupied 13.5 percent of public posts, compared to 16 percent in 2013. It recommended Bahrain to adopt the principle of transparency, and competitiveness; carry out political reforms, and issue a law criminalizing all forms of discrimination.[34]

Development, environment and business and human rights

15. OHR asked if the government will reach the national level to achieve global average temperature to 1.5°C, since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change. They asked Bahrain to share its greatest challenges to implement the Paris Agreement at the national level.[35]

Human rights and counter-terrorism

16. Alkarama, JS6, JS17 and JS2 observed that the amendments in 2013 and 2015 of the Anti-Terrorism Law restricted the fundamental freedoms and threatened peaceful activists, human rights defenders and members of the opposition. The vague nature of the aforementioned law has reportedly curtained fundamental freedoms. They recommended narrowing the definition of terrorism; amend the legislation in accordance with international law; abolishing decree No. 20 of 2013 and amend Law No. 58 of 2006 on the protection of society from terrorist acts that permit revoking the citizenship in terrorism related cases and revisit all judgments made by virtue of this law.[36]

2. Civil and Political Rights

Right to life, liberty and security of person[37]

17. Four submissions stated that Bahrain categorically rejected recommendations from eight countries urging it to abolish the death penalty and impose a moratorium on its application. Death penalty remained in force, often during unfair trials, in the Penal Code and the Terrorist Acts (No. 58/2006) for murder, terrorism-related offences and other crimes, including drugs offences. While reporting that 10 persons were sentenced to death, they recommended commuting all death sentences and establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to abolishing it.[38] Mabade'a called for accountability concerning the cases of death in detention as a result of torture or mistreatment.[39]

18. Five submissions noted that as was recommended during its previous review, the authorities have brought the definition of torture in national legislation in line with international standards and have criminalized acts of torture by introducing a number of amendments such as the Royal Decree No.52 of 2012 by amending the definition of torture under the Criminal Code. They reported that torture and other ill-treatment represent a major human rights concern as torture is still a common practice, particularly of detainees arrested on suspicion of terrorism or other security-related offences at the Criminal Investigations Directorate. They regretted that Bahrain has not implemented the BICI recommendations and the state of impunity is still dominant in Bahrain. Moreover, the public prosecution and judges have been unwilling to efficiently and impartially investigate allegations of torture or ill-treatment. The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) reported that it had received 908 complaints from May 2014 to April 2015, a 375 per cent increase over the previous year. They recommended amending the Penal Code to bring it in line with the CAT and end the practice of torture and reject any statement obtained thereby; investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of torture with penalties and ensure that conditions of detention are in conformity with international standards and implement all BICI relevant recommendations.[40]

19. ADHRB, JS4 and JS11 recommended Bahrain to mandate that the judiciary reject evidence obtained under duress and order immediate investigations into any allegations of torture and commute prison sentences based on coerced confessions, at the same time prosecute effectively all security agents that have allegedly committed torture.[41] AI and JS11 were concerned over the independence and impartiality of SIU as it failed to comply systematically with the Istanbul Protocol standards and compromised by its location. In 2014 report, the NIHR recommended relocating it to a different building from the Public Prosecution Office.[42]

20. ICSRF, JS1 and ADHRB observed that prisoners are held in correctional institutions that do not meet the Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, provide a fertile environment for torture and represent an instrument for revenge from the opposition. They recommended improving the conditions in all official prisons, in accordance with universally applicable minimum standards and reducing overcrowding.[43]

21. ADF recommended taking steps to recognize and follow national and international obligations to protect the right to life and introduce additional safeguards on abortion services.[44]

Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law [45]

22. Five submissions reiterated the recommendations that Bahrain fully supported concerning the review of charges against the persons convicted for exercising the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, and to release them immediately. They noted that unfair trials of government critics and opponents, including protesters, have become a prominent feature of the human rights landscape. They reported that the Bahraini authorities dangerously violated the minimum guarantees of the people's right to a fair trial.[46] JS6 recommended the review of all the judicial sentences that were issued over political backgrounds, hold the judicial officials accountable, and review the judicial procedures that deprive defendants their freedom.[47] ICSRF noted that there is no article on compensation due to judicial errors, recommending an amendment to the law allowing those persons to claim compensation.[48]

23. Alkarama and JS6 noted that Bahrain has not implemented the recommendations accepted during the last UPR concerning special courts, military tribunals and a National Safety Court continued to exist. They recommended abolishing this Court and limiting the jurisdiction of military courts to military personnel only.[49]

Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life[50]

24. JS12 observed that in its second UPR cycle, Bahrain fully supported recommendations (Recommendations 115.70, 115.93) concerning efforts to meet the aspirations of the victims of discrimination and the protection of ethnic and religious communities. The government has failed to implement those recommendations. On the contrary, the authorities have continued to discriminate against Bahrain's Shia majority – including the Baharna and Ajam ethnoreligious groups – in most aspects of daily life. JS12 recommended Bahrain to respect the right of the Shia community to publicly observe religious practices and holidays, reopen closed religious associations and Shia civil society groups and refrain from obstructing Friday prayers and other religious gatherings.[51] JS12, GIDHR and ODVV observed that the Bahraini authorities have increased restrictions on freedom of religion and conscience. They reported that at least 38 Shia mosques have been destroyed. They recommended respecting freedom of religion and take practical steps to stop any form of discrimination against Shia Muslims.[52]

25. AI, JS17 and JS2 stated that Bahrain received many recommendations in the 2nd UPR cycle, (115.99, 115.100, 115.101, 115.146, 115.157, 115.160, 115.161, 115.163) on freedom of expression, association and assembly and creating an enabling environment for civil society organizations (CSOs). They rejected the government interim report claiming that they implemented those recommendations, with the majority of domestic legislation criminalizing freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly remained in place. They recommended amending the 1989 Law of Associations, repeal Laws 18/1973, 32/2006 and 22/2013, and Articles 178 and 180 of the Penal Code; and unconditionally release and quash the convictions of those arrested and detained for exercising their freedom of peaceful assembly rights.[53] BHRO stated that the Bahraini authorities imposed numerous legislative and procedural constraints on civil society.[54]

26. JS1 observed that the authorities used several laws such as the Penal Code, the Terrorism Act, the Citizenship Act, and the Public Gatherings Law to silence political activists, human rights defenders, and influential people in the media field, in addition to others who are affiliated with the opposition.[55] AI, BHRO, ODVV, JS6, JS9, JS14, JS15 JS17 and JS2 noted that since Bahrain's last UPR, the authorities have continued to target the political opposition in Bahrain, imprisoning the leaders of the major opposition groups and restricting their activities. This law gives the Ministry of Justice the right to register and supervise political associations, while it is not obliged to clarify the reasons for refusing to accept the registration of new associations. As a result, the Ministry of Justice filed a lawsuit against Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, Bahrain's main Shia opposition group on July 17, 2016 and its Secretary General Sheikh Ali Salaman has been detained since December 2014 on charges related to his freedom of expression. They recommended amending the Political Associations Law, by revoking article 13, and163 of the Penal Code, and repeal all measures against the political opposition; allow opposition party members and leaders to exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, in line with international human rights law and release all leaders and political activists arrested since 2011.[56]

27. Alkarama and JS11 noted that over the past five years, Bahrain continued to face the consequences of the 2011 political crisis and the repression of the opposition by the authorities. Peaceful protests were severely repressed by security forces using excessive force. They recommended prosecuting all cases of excessive use of force.[57]

28. AI noted that with the amendment to the Law on Political Associations, (Law 26 of 2005), Bahrain introduced additional restrictions on religious freedoms, by prohibiting members of a political society from engaging in religious preaching and prohibiting leaders of a political society from giving religious speeches, sermons or guidance. The Decree 31 of 2013 also violated the rights to freedom of association and breached Bahrain's

international obligations under the ICCPR. AI and JS17 recommended Bahrain to repeal or amend all laws that unduly restrict the activities of political associations, including Decree 31 of 2013, Law 34 of 2014, and Law 26 of 2015.[58]

29. AI, BHRO and JS6 reported that Bahraini authorities, since 2012 UPR, banned announced demonstrational events held by registered civil and political associations. They stated that in 2013, a Royal-Decree was issued for amending Article 11 of the Law on Public Gatherings, banning indefinitely all public assemblies in Manama, with the exception of demonstrations to be held in front of international organizations. They recommended Bahrain to allow all forms of peaceful demonstration without restrictions or conditions; amend article no.11 of the law of demonstrations and amend the Penal Code to ensure that Article 179 is not misused to punish those who practice the right to peaceful protest.[59] JS11, NIHR and Mabade'a called on the government to ensure that law enforcement officials protect peaceful assemblies and to provide them with specialized human rights training to deal with those rallies, in addition to amending the law of 1982 No. 3.[60]

30. BHRO and JS1 recommended Bahrain to hold accountable those caused serious injuries to citizens during crackdown on protests and to practice self-restraint in suppressing events that derail from a peaceful nature.[61]

31. Seven submissions stated that Bahrain failed to address adequately many of its recommendations related to the rightful activities of human rights defenders (four UPR and the BICI recommendations) or introduced any meaningful reform instead, they intensified their clampdown and oppressive security measures on human rights defenders and civil society. Between June and September 2016, 24 individuals, including human rights defenders, former prisoners of conscience, a lawyer and a journalist, have faced official travel bans or been prevented from travelling abroad to participate in human rights advocacy meetings, including to attend the Human Rights Council 32nd and 33rd sessions. Nabeel Rajab, the President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, was arrested on 13 June 2016 and is on trial facing charges of "spreading false rumours in times of war", "insulting public authorities" and "insulting a foreign country". It recommended abandoning any restrictions or obstacles to the activities of individuals and organisations engaged in the protection and promotion of human rights, immediately and unconditionally release all activists and prisoners of conscience held in custody for defending human rights, promptly halt harassment and unjust trials against human rights defenders and enable them to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without being subjected to intimidation or retaliation.[62]

32. Six submissions noted that despite the accepted recommendations in the second UPR cycle, the Government has made no effort to implement greater protections for media and press freedoms since its previous cycle, and it continues to prosecute journalists and citizens for exercising the right to free expression. The editors-in-chief of Bahrain's six daily newspapers had signed a "charter of press ethics" empowering the Information Affairs Authority (IAA) to target and restrict media outlets. The 2002 Press and Publication Law empowered the government to prosecute journalists in 17 categories of offence. In February 2016, the government announced that it had finalized a first draft of a new law on media, but it did not provide a timeline for its promulgation. The government has specifically imposed greater restrictions on online free expression with a series of new decrees and the cybercrime law." In the first two years of the second UPR cycle, the government restricted the travel of 44 journalists and 22 media organizations. Activists and journalists remain at an extremely high risk of arrest, torture, and imprisonment for doing their jobs. They recommended passing a comprehensive new media and publication law that fully enshrines the right to free expression in accordance with international human rights standards; repeal and Decree 68/2016 on live streaming and publication of videos;

repeal Article 169 of the Penal Code, the 2002 Press and Publications Law, the Press Law (Decree 47/2002), the Law of Protecting Society from Terrorist Acts, the cybercrime law, and the Charter of Press Ethics; cease the practice of forced closure or suspension of media outlets, and end license requirements and establish independent regulatory bodies for the media in compliance with international human rights law, promulgate; prohibit the arbitrary disruption of internet service; cease mass online filtering and reinstate arbitrarily blocked websites and allow foreign press to report freely from Bahrain.[63] RWB stated that beyond the repression of traditional media, the Government is increasingly restricting internet freedom. In 2012, the country became part of their list of "Enemies of the Internet". It recommended putting an end to the filtering and blockage of the internet as well as to online surveillance and revise the 2002 press and publications code and the telecommunications law.[64]

33. RWB stated that freedom of information and the press has considerably deteriorated with the continued repression of journalists and other news providers and increased online censorship. They reported that Bahrain ranks 162nd out of 180 in the 2016 Press Freedom Index. About 14 journalists continued to be behind bars for having simply done their job. RWB recommended Bahrain to cease all harassment of journalists, free immediately all journalists and put an end to impunity.[65] JS2 recommended de-criminalizing defamation, including through repealing Articles 214 and 216 of the Penal Code regarding insulting the King of Bahrain, or its flag or the national emblem and offending the National Assembly, the army, courts, or government agencies.[66]

34. FN and JS17 was concerned regarding the arbitrary detention of political prisoners noting that in the previous UPR, Bahrain accepted most of the recommendations related to arbitrary detention. Instead of amending its penal code to align with its obligations under international law to support freedom of expression, it increased the penalty for slandering the king to up to seven years in prison. In 2013 alone, 328 people were brought to trial for alleged terrorism offenses. They recommended that Bahrain immediately and unconditionally release and rehabilitate the civil and political rights of Abdulhadi al-Khawaja and all other individuals who have been detained under criminal or administrative charges for exercising their fundamental human rights, including the right to freedoms of expression, association, and assembly and allow them to peacefully promote the cause of human rights in accordance with the rights guaranteed to them in international human rights treaties.[67]

35. Four submissions stated that since the 2011 unrest and the UPR in 2012 (recommendation 115.103), the government failed to integrate members of the Shia community into the police force, and their presence remained negligible. They stated that Bahrain has for decades despite nominal efforts to recruit Shia citizens for service in the security forces after 2011. They reported sectarianization in the police force, suggesting that they tolerated, if not directly, anti-Shia and extremist views within the security forces. They recommended increasing the percentage in all subdivisions of the security forces with the aim of gradually achieving proportional representation and cease discrimination in recruiting and hiring for the security forces.[68]

Prohibition of all forms of slavery[69]

36. JS8, NIHR and BYLA observed concerning recommendations (115.94 and 97) on the prevention and elimination of trafficking in human beings that despite the State's efforts to establish the "National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking" there is a lack of policies protecting victims and absence of a comprehensive national strategy to combat human trafficking. They recommended amending Law (1 of 2008) regarding human trafficking to expand its definition and setting deterrent penalties to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking.[70]

Right to privacy and family life[71]

37. Six submissions stated that the first part of the family law (the section of Sunni sect) was adopted in May 2009, while the second part (the section of the doctrine of al-Ja'afari personal status law) was not yet adopted. This delay is causing suffering to women and her children belonging to this sect, recommending a rapid issuance of the second part.[72]

3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work[73]

38. GIDHR recommended Bahrain to reform provisions contained within the Labor Law, the Civil Service Law, and Legislative Decree No. 41 that instigate undue economic impact against Shia communities.[74]

39. JS8 and NIHR called on the legislative authority to pass a law to protect the rights of about 70,000 domestic workers, which 40 percent of them are foreigners. A law that should deal with issues related to recruitment offices, including by taking strict legal measures against employers and companies that do not comply with the minimum standards for the protection of lodging of foreign workers.[75]

Right to social security [76]

40. GIDHR recommended Bahrain to ensure the extension of social welfare benefits to low-income Shia families without discrimination.[77]

Right to an adequate standard of living[78]

41. JS12 observed that in recent years the government has done little to address the systemic socioeconomic inequalities between the Sunni and Shia communities, particularly in the cases of the Baharna and Ajam ethnoreligious groups. Though the government does offer welfare programs, restrictions on eligibility, prevents many families from obtaining these benefits. Citizens living in underprivileged areas often find themselves without houses, adequate sewage systems, and water supply. Shia families face institutionalized obstacles in their attempts to acquire state-owned housing. JS12 recommended creating new housing projects in impoverished Shia communities.[79]

42. BJA called upon the executive body to speed up the development of the housing projects for all journalists. BJA called on the Government of Bahrain to provide job security measures, Health insurance, and an emergency fund for journalists due to the importance of the field of journalism in holding the essence of freedom of speech.[80]

Right to health[81]

43. JS18 observed and reported on the low standard of health at the largest public hospital, with more than sixty medics' personnel arrested and tortured, the dismissal of 200 experienced doctors, just for providing medical care to injured protestors, in the wake of the 2011 uprisings, coupled with the hiring of foreign medics and poor hospital management. They recommended Bahrain to reinstate dismissed doctors, hire qualified nurses, and adopt appropriate administrative measures and cease all interference in the work of medical personnel, including judicial harassment and violence. They also recommended increasing funding for health sector, establish additional public hospitals and cease all forms of retaliation against medical personnel for respecting medical neutrality and impartiality.[82]

Right to education[83]

44. BTA and ICSFT observed that in the past five years, specifically since February 2011, there has been clearly increased level of discrimination in employment, especially against Shiite employees at Bahrain Training Institute, and in promotions in the education sector and discrimination in educational scholarships.[84]

45. JS12 and ICSFT observed that in the education system, government policy prevents the vast majority of Shia children from receiving a Shia religious education within their schools. Shia teachers also face discriminatory practices in hiring and promotions. According to Shia students, the Ministry of Education also displays an anti-Shia bias when distributing scholarships. Though the government claims that it has reinstated nearly all those who lost their jobs in the aftermath of the 2011 unrest, the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions found that several hundred cases had yet to be resolved as of 2013.[85]

4. Rights of specific persons or groups

Women[86]

46. BYLA JS8, and LHRD reported concerning the 2nd UPR cycle recommendations on the advancement of women, (115.39, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 96, 77); taking further measures, including legislative, in order to expand their rights and opportunities and to promote gender equality, (115.68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 77) that limited percentage of women occupy decision making positions, (3 in the Council of Representatives, 8 in the Shura Council, 7 women judges, and 1 female minister). They recommended Bahrain to take legislative measures to expand those rights and opportunities and to realize gender equality, setting a 30% national-level quota for political participation (recommendations 71, 73).[87] JS8 and JS9 recommended adopting a new law on CSOs in compliance with ICCPR, to repeal all restrictive measures against CSOs and revoke article 18 from the law on civil society, in order for NGOs to assist women in the participation in the political life.[88]

47. BYLA noted that discrimination continues with the lack of translation of Article (18) of the Constitution into laws guaranteeing equality between genders, such as the "Citizenship Law", and the absence of the Jaafari section of the Family Law despite recommendations (115.7, 8, 9, 10) considering the reservations on Articles (2, 9/2, 10/4, 15/4, 16) violate the essence of CEDAW.[89]

Children[90]

48. ACFH expressed its concerns about child rights in Bahrain, particularly with the growing exploitation of children in the villages and exposing them to violence, marches and acts of arson and Molotov cocktails by the parties and militant groups, causing serious violations to the future of children and juveniles in Bahrain, which require from the competent Bahraini authorities to put deterrent legal action from the exploitation of children by extremist parties in Bahrain.[91]

Persons with disabilities[92]

49. NIHR and Mabade'a reported on the need to pass a new law to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in accordance with convention on disabilities and to continue to implement and enforce the 2012–2016 national strategy of the rights of persons with disabilities. It urged the government to enhance the infrastructure to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in public facilities.[93]

Minorities and indigenous peoples[94]

50. ADF observed that while Article 18 of the Constitution guarantees equality and protection from discrimination based on religion, Article 2 states that Islamic sharia law is the main source of legislation and Article 22 of the Constitution is very narrow and conditional and does not explicitly guarantee the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. Christians and other religious minorities continue to suffer from discrimination and persecution. The main source of persecution of Christians in Bahrain is Islamic extremism. Christians and other religious groups are subject to government-imposed limitations on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. The media law prohibits anti-Islamic publications and broadcasts. ADF recommended Bahrain to take steps to combat Islamic extremism; protect religious minorities from persecution and discrimination.[95]

Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons[96]

51. JS9 observed that the Government of Bahrain does not recognize the migrant status but as expatriate nature of workers with important significance.[97] ACFH and BHRWS expressed its severe concerns on the security and the safety of expatriate workers by being targeted by extremist and radical parties and their intimidation, threats and closure of their shops.[98] BHRWS observed that foreign workers continue to be exposed to violations of their rights and operates under hazardous conditions.[99]

52. BYLA noted that despite the State's efforts to establish the "National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking" (NCCHT), major challenges facing migrant worker, with the continuation of violation of migrant labour rights, such as retention of official documents, the absence of a law to prevent sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace and recommended increased efforts to advance the fight against violence by conducting investigations with visa dealers to prevent those practices.[100]

Stateless persons[101]

53. Six submissions urged Bahrain to continue taking temporary measures for granting citizenship to children of Bahraini woman marrying a non-Bahraini until the draft law amending the Nationality Law comes into effect (115.75, 95, 96, 140, 141, 142, 143). They also noted that Citizenship Act of 1963, as amended, continue to deny them the right to pass on their nationality to their children and spouses, preventing women from enjoying citizenship rights on an equal basis with men. They recommended Bahrain to comprehensively amend the nationality law, particularly Article (4), aimed at granting women equal rights to men concerning nationality in accordance with Bahrain international treaty obligations, particularly.[102]

54. Seven submissions stated that Bahrain issued a legislative Decree No. 21 of 2014 to amend the provisions of the Bahraini Citizenship Act of 1963. The amendment in Article 8 provided that "Bahraini citizenship may be revoked, upon request from the Interior Minister and approval of the cabinet, from any naturalised person" who has, among other things, been "found guilty of a crime connected with honour and integrity" within ten years of receiving it. They noted that since 2012, the Bahraini authorities have arbitrarily revoked the Bahraini nationality of at least 316 people, including Sheikh Isa Qassem, effectively rendering the majority of them stateless. Since 2014, at least six individuals have been forcibly expelled from the country. They recommended Bahrain to end the repressive nature of the 2006 Anti-Terrorism Law and revisit all judgments made by virtue of this law.[103] HRF recommended Bahrain to return those forced into exile to Bahrain.[104] Mabade'a and ICSRF was also concerned revocation of nationality and particularly from family members as it goes beyond the principle of personal punishment in violation to article 20 (a

and b) of the Constitution andrecommended amending the constitution prohibiting the revocation of nationality.[105]

55. JS10 estimated the number of stateless Bidoon to be several thousand in Bahrain. Children of stateless fathers continue to be born, and remain, stateless. Bidoon, many of Bahrain's Ajam population, an ethnoreligious group of predominantly Shia individuals of Persian descent, remain stateless. The denial of citizenship for Ajam has forced the community disproportionately into lower socioeconomic conditions.[106]

Notes

[1] The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: www.ohchr.org.
Civil society
Individual submissions:

AI	Amnesty International, London, (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
ACFH	Ahwazi Centre for Human Rights, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
ADF	ADF International 'Alliance Defending Freedom', Geneva (Switzerland);
ADHRB	Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), Washington, DC (United States of America);
Alkarama	Alkarama Foundation, Geneva, (Switzerland);
BHRO	Bahrain Human Rights Observatory, Adliya (Bahrain);
BHRWS	Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society, London, (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
BJA	Bahrain Journalists' Association, Manama (Bahrain);
BYLA	Bahrain Young Ladies Association, Manama (Bahrain);
BTA	Submission by Bahrain Teachers Society, Manama (Bahrain);
ECDHR	European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights, Brussels (Belgium);
FFF	Four Freedoms Forum, Kaneohe (United States of America);
FN	Freedom Now, Washington, DC (United States of America);
GECHR	Gulf European Centre for Human Rights, London, (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
GG	The Good (Global Organizing for Optimal Dignity & Diplomacy) Group , Honolulu (United States of America);
GIDHR	Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR), Sydney, NSW (Australia);
HRF	Human Rights First, Washington, DC (United States of America);
ICSFT	International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights, Grand-Saconnex (Switzerland);
ICSRF	The International Center for supporting Rights and Freedoms (ICSRF), Cairo (Egypt);
LHRD	Liberties and Human Rights Department in Al Wefaq, Manama (Bahrain);
Mabade'a	Mabade'a Society For Human Rights (جمعية مبادئ لحقوق الانسان), Manama (Bahrain);
MCHR	Manama Centre for Human Rights, Manama (Bahrain);
OHR	OCEANIA Human Rights Hawaii, Kailua (United States of America);
ODVV	The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) Tehran (Iran (Islamic Republic of));
RWB/RSF	Reporters Without Borders, Paris, (France).

Joint submissions:

JS1 **Joint submission 1 submitted by:** Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Khiam Rehabilitation center for victims of Torture, The Regional Forum for Human Rights, (Bahrain);

JS2 **Joint submission 2 submitted by:** ARTICLE 19 and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

JS3 **Joint submission 3 submitted by:** SALAM Democracy and Human Right and Sentinel Human Rights Defenders, London, (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

JS4 **Joint submission 4 submitted by:** Freedom House, Bahrain Center for Human Rights and Gulf Center for Human Rights, Washington, DC (United States of America);

JS5 **Joint submission 5 submitted by:** Equality Now, New York (United States of America), Bahrain Women's Union, (Bahrain) and Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, Nairobi (Kenya)/c/o Women's Refugee Commission, New York (United States of America);

JS6 **Joint submission 6 submitted by:** Human Rights Defenders for Bahrain and Bahrain Interfaith Center, Manama (Bahrain);

JS7 **Joint submission 7 submitted by:** The Advocates for Human Rights, Lualua Center for Human Rights, Gulf Civil Society Associations Forum, Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture and The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, Minneapolis (United States of America);

JS8 **Joint submission 8 submitted by: Bahrain Women Union** (الاتحاد النسائي البحريني), Bahrain Society Renaissance Girl (جمعية نهضة فتاة البحرين), Bahraini Women's Association (جمعية المرأة البحرينية), Rural Girl Society (جمعية فتاة الريف) and Bahrain Women Association for Human Development (جمعية البحرين النسائية للتنمية الإنسانية), Manama (Bahrain);

JS9 **Joint submission 9 submitted by:** Bahrain Transparency Society (BTS), and Bahrain Human Rights Society (BHRS), Manama (Bahrain);

JS10 **Joint submission 10 submitted by:** The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion Eindhoven (The Netherlands) and Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, Eindhoven (Netherlands);

JS11 **Joint submission 11 submitted by:** Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) Washington, DC (United States of America) and Reprieve, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

JS12 **Joint submission 12 submitted by:** Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) and Bahrain Center Cultural Society (BCCS) Washington, DC (United States of America);

JS13 **Joint submission 13 submitted by:** European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (ECDHR), Brussels (Belgium); Americans for Democracy& Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), Washington, DC (United States of America) , English PEN and PEN International, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), and Reporters Without Borders (RSF/RWB), Paris, (France);

JS14	**Joint submission 14 submitted by:** Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), Human Rights First (HRF), and Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), Washington, DC (United States of America);
JS15	**Joint submission 15 submitted by:** Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) Washington, DC (United States of America), and Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), Washington, DC (United States of America);
JS16	**Joint submission 17 submitted by:** Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) and Iraqi Development Organization (IDO) Baghdad (Iraq);
JS17	**Joint submission 18 submitted by:** CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation Johannesburg (South Africa), Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Washington, DC (United States of America) and Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR), Washington, DC (United States of America);
JS18	**Joint submission 19 submitted by:** European Centre for Rights and Democracy (ECDHR), Brussels (Belgium); Defenders for Medical Impartiality (DMI), Beirut (Lebanon).

National human rights institution(s):

NIHR	National Institution for Human Rights, Manama (Bahrain);

[1] The following abbreviations are used in UPR documents:

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR;
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR;
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW;
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT;
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child;
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict;
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography;
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure;
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Fam., etc.
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD;
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

[2] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/9, paras. 115.1-115.20, 115.94, 115.97-115.97, 115.59, 115.157 and 115.163.

[3] HRF, page 3 and Mahmood's, page 11.

[4] ADHRB pages 6, JS4, page 7, JS9, page 3 and Alkarama, page 3. See also recommendations 115.1 (Czech Republic), 115.3 (Spain) and 115.18 (Uruguay).

[6] JS7, page 7.
[7] JS11, page 9; Mah Mahrahi'a, page 11 and HRF, page 2.
[8] BYLA, page 2.
[9] JS9, page 9 and 10.
[10] JS9, page 9 and ICNRF, page 5.
[11] JS10, page 9.
[12] CIDVV pages 5.
[13] NDHR, page 6, BYLA, page 2.
[14] BYLA, pages 4 and 5, JS5, page 3-4, JS8, page 4 and 5 and JS10, pages 5, 6 and 9.
[15] MCHR, page 2.
[16] AI, page 1.
[17] HRF, page 3, GEHR, page 3, JS17, page 13, JS7, page 7, JS17, page 18, ADHRB pages 6, HRF page, 2, JS4, page 7, JS6, page 9, JS9, page 4 and AI, pages 1 and 2 and JS2, pages 1 and 2.
A/HRC/21/6, 6 July 2012, recommendations 115.59 (Austria), 115.60 (Latvia), 115.61 (Latvia), 115.62 (Uruguay), 115.63 (France), 115.64 (Korea), 115.65 (Slovenia); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Bahrain (addendum)*, A/HRC/21/6/Add.1/Rev.1, 12 October 2012, paragraphs 16, 18. The Special Rapporteur, Mr Mandez, stated "This is the second time that my visit has been postponed, at very short notice. It is effectively a cancellation as no alternative dates were proposed nor is there a future road map to discuss." - *Bahrain / Human rights: Government effectively cancels UN Special Rapporteur on torture's visit*, available at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13261&LangID=E (accessed 8 August 2016). Bahrain has received visit requests from the Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (30 October 2013), the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (in 2012 and again in February 2016), the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression (14 November 2014), and the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights (9 July 2015).
[18] Alkarama, pages 3 and 5, JS11, page 5 and 9, JS4, page 7, JS6, page 9, JS9, page 4 and AI, pages 1 and 2, JS2, pages 1 and 2, CIDVV pages 4-5, JS17, page 18, ADHRB pages 6 and HRF page, 2.
[19] Alkarama, pages 3 and 5 and JS11, page 5 and 9, JS4, page 7, [illegible], page 9, JS9, page 4 and AI, pages 1 and 2, JS2, pages 1 and 2, CIDVV pages 4-5, JS17, page 18, ADHRB pages 6 and HRF page, 2.
[20] GEHR, page 3, JS17, page 13 and JS7, page 7.
[21] JS6, page 10.
[22] JS17, page 13 and JS7, page 7.
[23] AI, pages 2 and 7, Alkarama, page 2, JS9, page 1 and 2, JS14, pages 5 and JS2, page 10. See also recommendations 115.28 (Norway), 115.43 (Sweden), 115.45 (Turkey), 115.99 (Canada), 115.107 (Republic of Korea), 115.124 (Denmark), 115.127 (Thailand), 115.128 (Belgium), 115.132 (Qatar), 115.133 (Egypt), 115.134 (Jordan), 115.135 (Kuwait), 115.136 (Oman), 115.137 (Saudi Arabia), and 115.142 (Japan) concerning implementation of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) recommendations.
[24] JS14, pages 8.
[25] Alkarama, page 4, NDHR, page 5, Mahrahi'a, page 11.
[26] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.21-115.27, 115.29-115.30, 115.32-115.38, 115.40-115.41, 115.44, 115.46, 115.48-115.50, 115.52-115.53, 115.55, 115.68, 115.77, 115.88, 115.90, 115.92, 115.95-115.96, 115.102-115.105, 115.115, 115.119, 115.120, 115.126, 115.130, 115.140-115.148, 115.151-115.154, 115.157, 115.160, 115.162, 115.164 and 115.166-115.168.
[27] Alkarama, page 3, 4.
[28] BICI/V/5, page 6.
[29] JS16, pages 1-6. See also recommendations 115.34 (Indonesia), 115.35 (Maldives), and 115.36 (Poland), JS17, page 13 and Alkarama, page, 3 and 4 and AI, page 3. See also Global Alliance of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Report and Recommendations of the Session of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA)*, Geneva, 9-13 MAY 2016, available at http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/ICCAccreditation/Documents/SCA%20(NAI)%20(EPOR)%20-%20MAY%202016-English.pdf (accessed on 26 September 2016).

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pages 6, 7 and 8, AI, pages 4 and 7, JS9, pages 5, 6 and 7 and JS15, pages 8 and 10 and JS14, pages 7, 10 and 11. See also recommendations 115.110 (Islamic Republic of Iran), 115.101 (Germany), 115.100 (Czech Republic), 115.122 (Norway) and 115.146 (France).

[57] Alkarama, pages 3 and 7 and JS11, pages 5 and 6. Recommendations 115.24 (Slovakia), 115.27 (Ireland), 115.89 (Germany) and 115.109 (Canada).

[58] AI, pages 4, 5 and 7 and JS17, pages 10, 14 and 16.

[59] AI, page 6, BHRO, pages 5 and 6 and JS6, page 8.

[60] JS11, pages 1 and 6, NIHR, page 4 and 6, Mabade'a, page 12. See recommendations 115.89 (Germany), 115.102 (Spain), 115.104 (Palestine), 115.105 (Saudi Arabia), 115.109 (Canada), 115.130 (Netherlands).

[61] BHRO, page 6 and JS1, page 13.

[62] JS3, pages 4 and 7, JS4, page 7, AI, pages 5 and 7, JS6, page 7, JS14, pages 6 and 7, JS17, pages 7-10, JS2, pages 7-10 and ODVV page 3. See also recommendations No. 115.59, 115.62, 115.63, 115.65.

[63] RWB, pages 2 and 3, JS13 pages 1-7, NIHR, page 5 and JS17, pages 12 and 13, BJA, pages 2 and 4, and JS2, pages 2, 3 and 4. Recommendations 115.25 (Mexico), 115.30 (Egypt), 115.148 (Norway), 115.149 (Chile), 115.152 (Austria), 115.153 (Canada) 115.154 (Estonia) 115.155 (Germany), 115.156 (Belgium), 115.157 (the Netherlands) 115.158 (Spain), and 115.161 (Australia).

[64] RWB, page 2 and 3.

[65] RWB, page 1 and 3.

[66] JS2, page 10.

[67] FN, pages 2, 3 and 6 and JS17, pages 8-10.

[68] JS9, page 2, JS14, pages 2-4 and LHRD, page 6 and GIDHR, page 3. See also recommendation para.115.103. (United States of America).

[69] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.91, 115.94, 115.97, 115.100-115.101, 115.122, 115.146 and 115.159.

[70] JS8, page 9, NIHR, pages 4 and 5, BYLA, pages 5-7.

[71] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.75, 115.138-115.39 and 115.140.

[72] JS8, page 7, NIHR, page 4, MCHR, page 2 and 3, GECHR, page 1, BYLA, page, 7 and BHRWS, page 5.

[73] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.164, 115.175 and 115.176.

[74] GIDHR, page 3.

[75] JS8, pages 8-10, NIHR, page 6.

[76] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, para. 115.47.

[77] GIDHR, page 3.

[78] For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/21/6, para 115.165.

[79] JS12, pages 8, 9 and 11.

[80] BJA page 3.

[81] For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/21/6, para. 115.120.

[82] JS18, pages 1, 3-5.

[83] For relevant recommendations see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.169-115.172.

[84] BTA, pages 2-5 and ICSFT, pages 2 and 8.

[85] JS12, pages 10 and 11 and ICSFT, pages 2-11.

[86] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115, 115.39, 115.51, 115.69 and 115.71-115.74.

[87] BYLA, pages 3 and 4 and HLRD, pages 6 and 7. See also recommendations 115.49 (Egypt), 115.139 (Brazil), 115.168 (Uruguay), 115.48 (Bangladesh), 115.50 (Oman), 115.52 (United Arab Emirates), 115.96 (Argentina), 155.77 (Nicaragua), 115.69 (Jordan), 115.71. (Morocco), 115.72 (Republic of Korea) and 115.73 (Chile).

[88] JS8, page 4 and JS9, pages 5 and 6.

[89] BYLA, pages 1 and 2. See also recommendations, 115.7 (Uruguay), 115.8 (Chile), 115.9 (Slovenia), 115.10 (Republic of Korea).

[90] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.29 and 115.168.

[91] ACFH page 1.

[92] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115, 115.38, 115.168.

[93] Mabade'a, page 8 and NIHR, pages 2 and 3.

[94] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, para. 115.93.
[95] ADF, pages 3-6.
[96] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.76, 115.173-115.175 and 115.176.
[97] JS9, page 9.
[98] ACFH page 1 and BHRWS, page 5.
[99] BHRWS, page 5.
[100] BYLA, page 7.
[101] For relevant recommendations, see A/HRC/21/6, paras. 115.7, 115.75, 115.95-115.96 and 115.140-115.143.
[102] NIHR, page 2, Mahadeʼa, page 7, JS5, pages 34, JS10, page 5, 6, 9 and 10, JS8, page 4 and 5 and BYLA, pages 4 and 5. Recommendations paras. 115, 115.75 (India), 115.95 (Uruguay), 115.96 (Argentina), 115.140 (Japan), 115.141 (Norway), 115.142 (Sudan), 115.143 (Algeria).
[103] JS6, pages 3, 4, 7 and 8, JS10, pages 7 and 7, AI, pages 6 and 8, JS12 pages 2, 3, 5, 6 and 11, Alkarama, pages 3, 7 and 8, JS6, page 2-4 and 12 and JS10, page 10.
[104] HRF, page 4.
[105] ICSRF, pages 9 and 10 and Mahadeʼa, page 7.
[106] JS10, page 4.